

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 756

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 3647

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BM

SUBJECT: INYA LAKE HOTEL INCIDENT

REF: RANGOON 3630 (NOTAL)

1. RANGOON REVERBERATING LIKE CRACKED BELL IN RESPONSE TO BLOW STRUCK BY PRESIDENT NE WIN IN HIS NOW FAMOUS CHRISTMAS EVE RAMPAGE AT INYA LAKE HOTEL, WHERE HE BROKE UP THE BAND AND PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED AT LEAST THREE PEOPLE. INCIDENT IS TALK OF RANGOON AND POPULAR VARIATIONS ON WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED ARE RAPIDLY BECOMING MORE FANCIFUL.

2. MOST INTRIGUING ASPECT OF INCIDENT, WHY PRESIDENT NE WIN ACTED AS HE DID, HAS YET TO BE SATISFACTORILY EXPLAINED. MOST COMMON EXPLANATION INVOLVES NE WIN'S DAUGHTER, SANDRA, WHO SUPPOSEDLY ATTENDED DANCE AGAINST FATHER'S WISHES. HE WAS FURTHER IRRITATED BY LOUD MUSIC WHICH HE COULD EASILY HEAR AT HIS RESIDENCE ACROSS THE LAKE. THIS PROVED TO BE LAST STRAW AND PRESIDENT NE WIN THEN WENT ON HIS RAMPAGE. INTERESTINGLY, SOME PARTY-GOERS, ON SEEING NE WIN ARRIVE, BELIEVED HIM THERE TO WISH THEM MERRY CHRISTMAS.

3. PRESIDENT NE WIN HAS LONG BEEN REPUTED TO HAVE SHORT TEMPER,
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AND THERE ARE SEVERAL REPORTED INCIDENTS IN HIS PAST WHERE HE

HAS PHYSICALLY ATTACKED OTHERS, ALMOST ALWAYS IN CONNECTION WITH PERSONAL MATTERS, SUCH AS PERCEIVED INSULTS TO HIS WIFE. HOWEVER, NEVER BEFORE HAS HE ELECTED TO ACT OUT HIS ANGER BEFORE SUCH A LARGE AUDIENCE. PAST INCIDENTS WERE HUSHED UP AND REMAIN GENERALLY UNKNOWN. HOWEVER, THIS TIME, IN VIEW OF LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED, INCLUDING FOREIGNERS, NEWS WILL INEVITABLY LEAK TO OUTSIDE WORLD TO THE EMBARRASSMENT OF THE GUB. OPPONENTS OF NE WIN AND GUB WILL CERTAINLY MAKE MOST OF IT.

4. WHERE THIS ALL WILL LEAD IS NOT CERTAIN. MOST LIKELY, PERHAPS, IS THAT IT WILL GO DOWN AS JUST ANOTHER EVENT, IGNORED BUT NOT FORGOTTEN, IN NE WIN'S EVENT-FILLED CAREER. ON OTHER HAND, IF OTHER GUB LEADERS BEGIN TO BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT NE WIN IS LOSING HIS GRIP, INCIDENT COULD MARK BEGINNING OF DESTABILIZING PERIOD IN GUB INNER CIRCLES.
OSBORN

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